



OFFICE OF THE CHAIR  
**MENOMINEE INDIAN  
 TRIBE OF WISCONSIN**

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# Statement from the Chair

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 2, 2016

**CONTACT:**

Joan Delabreau  
 Tribal Chairwoman

## **Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Issues decision granting Aquila Resources, Inc. "Back 40" Mine Permit**

(Keshena, WI) – On September 2, 2016, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality ("MDEQ") announced its decision to grant the mine permit for Aquila Resources, Inc. "Back 40" Mine. The "Back 40" project as proposed is an open-pit gold, zinc, and copper mine and processing facility in Lake Township, MI next to the Menominee River. The Menominee Tribe is appalled with this decision due to the potential catastrophic impacts to the Menominee River, local community and our Tribe's place of Origin at the Mouth of the Menominee River.

Tribal Chairwoman, Joan Delabreau, stated the following in response to this decision,

***"The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin is sickened by MDEQ's decision to approve the application to grant Aquila Resources, Inc. authorization to move forward with their Back 40 mining project. The Tribe has and will continue to fight to protect any land within our ancestral territory that contains the remains of our Ancestors and our cultural resources. The federal governments' failure to uphold their trust responsibility by delegating their responsibilities to the State of Michigan under the Clean Water Act is flawed. I feel that the Federal government can delegate authority under the Act to the State, but can never delegate their trust responsibility."***

Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, David "Nahwahquaw" Grignon, stated the following in response to this decision,

***"The Menominee Nation's sacred sites and other cultural resources are contained within the footprint of the mine; an area that will be excavated, if final approval is granted. Our place of origin at the mouth of the Menominee River may be destroyed by any adverse impacts on the land, environment and water from mining disasters. The federal agencies, charged with upholding trust responsibility to Tribes, are not living up to their responsibilities through their inaction to protect our sacred and cultural resources on the Menominee River and the site of the Back 40 Mine."***

There will be a public hearing for comments on the proposed decision to grant Aquila Resources, Inc. Back 40 Mine Permit on October 6, 2016 at the Stephenson High School, Stephenson MI from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. CST. If you cannot attend, you can also submit written comments to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality until November 3, 2016.

More information will be available at the **"Remembering our Ancestors"** gathering being held on September 22, 2016 in Lake Township, Michigan. For information on this event, please contact Guy Reiter at (715)853-2776 or via electronic mail at [anahkwet@hotmail.com](mailto:anahkwet@hotmail.com).

**#MITW#**